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25 Attorneys for Plaintiffs and the Proposed Class

26 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
27 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

28 SHIRLEY "RAE" ELLIS, LEAH
HORSTMAN and ELAINE SASAKI, on
behalf of themselves and all others
similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

COSTCO WHOLESALE
CORPORATION,

Defendant.

Case No. C-04-3341 MHP

**DECLARATION OF BARBARA F.
RESKIN**

1 I, Barbara F. Reskin, declare:

2 I make this declaration of my own personal knowledge and could testify if called
3 as a witness.

4
5 **ASSIGNMENT, QUALIFICATIONS AND MATERIALS REVIEWED**

6 ***Assignment***

7 1. I was asked to review materials pertaining to personnel policies and
8 practices of Costco and to address whether Costco has a common culture and common policies,
9 practices or procedures that are uniform across the U.S. retail divisions regarding advancement
10 into assistant warehouse manager and warehouse manager positions, and, if so, the implications
11 of Costco's common culture and practices on women's qualifications for and access to positions
12 as warehouse manager or assistant manager. Finally, I was asked to offer an opinion as to the
13 effectiveness of Costco's personnel practices (including its diversity programs) for identifying,
14 monitoring, and eliminating potential discriminatory barriers to women's promotion to posts as
15 assistant warehouse manager and warehouse manager.

16
17 ***Qualifications***

18 2. I received my Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Washington in
19 1973 where I was a National Science Foundation fellow. I have been a Professor of Sociology at
20 the Universities of Michigan, Illinois, Ohio State (where I was department chair and a
21 distinguished professor), and Harvard University. I am currently the S. Frank Miyamoto
22 Professor of Sociology at the University of Washington.

23 3. I have served as an expert in several workplace discrimination lawsuits (see
24 Appendix). I have served as a consultant to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, have been on
25 several National Research Council Committees, and was study director for the NRC's Committee
26 on Women's Employment and Related Social Issues which was supported by the Department of
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1 Labor's Employment Training Division. I collaborated with the Employment Policy Institute to
2 study the impact of nonstandard jobs on workers and on work-family issues, projects supported
3 by the Sloan and Ford Foundations.

4 4. I have been recognized by my profession and the American scholarly
5 community in several ways. I have been elected a Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences
6 and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. I have been elected both President and Vice
7 President of the American Sociological Association, and I have received the Association's
8 Distinguished Scholarship Award for research on sex and gender. I have been a Fellow at the
9 Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University.

10 5. I teach graduate and undergraduate courses on statistics, the sociology of
11 work and labor markets, social stratification, and gender and race in work organizations. My
12 specialties include quantitative and qualitative research on gender, race, and ethnic inequality in
13 work organizations and labor markets, and I do research in these areas. Over the past twenty
14 years, much of my research has focused on issues of workplace discrimination and on
15 organizational policies and practices that can mitigate conscious and unconscious stereotyping,
16 automatic and conscious ingroup favoritism, and sex bias. My research has been supported by
17 grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Science Foundation. I have
18 also published several dozen scholarly articles and chapters—several of the former in my
19 discipline's and other disciplines' top journals, and almost entirely in peer reviewed journals. I
20 have published several scholarly monographs and books about gender and work. A copy of my
21 *curriculum vitae* is attached to this report.

22 6. I have given invited lectures about my research at the Harvard Business
23 School, the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, MIT's Sloan School, the Yale Law
24 School, Princeton University, UCLA, Stanford University Law School, the University of
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1 Chicago, Northwestern University, the University of Michigan, Indiana University, the University
2 of Manchester (England), among others, and have taught short courses at the University of Notre
3 Dame, Stockholm University and the University of Trondheim, Norway.

4 ***Materials Reviewed***

5
6 7. To prepare this report I have read the depositions and accompanying
7 exhibits of Costco's executives, as well as some Divisional, Regional, and Warehouse Managers
8 who are responsible for creating and implementing the company's personnel policies regarding
9 compensation, hiring, promotion, job assignment, and related personnel matters. I also read the
10 depositions of the named plaintiffs (Shirley Rae Ellis, Leah Horstman, and Elaine Sasaki) as well
11 as some class members. These documents include organizational charts, committee minutes,
12 correspondence, memos, reports, results of focus groups, and presentations relating to personnel
13 policy and practice, and documents describing the culture and history of Costco. I have examined
14 statistical data prepared by Dr. Richard Drogin.

15
16 ***Method of Analyzing Documents and Reaching My Conclusions***

17 8. I have studied these materials in the context of a large body of social
18 scientific research on sex stereotyping and ingroup bias as well as personnel practices. This body
19 of research appears in peer reviewed journals or edited volumes of the highest scholarly caliber.
20 In arriving at the conclusions I express in this report, I treat the depositions and the exhibits as
21 data. Based on these data, I first examine whether Costco establishments across the U.S. show
22 uniform features, a collective culture, and consistent personnel policies across stores. I then
23 examine whether Costco's personnel practices create barriers to women's opportunity to advance
24 to managerial positions within Costco's warehouses based on social scientific knowledge about
25 the kinds of practices that reduce some groups' access to high-level jobs. Finally, I assess the
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1 extent to which the data in the depositions and exhibits show personnel practices that have been
2 shown in the scientific research to eliminate or circumvent barriers to women's advancement.¹
3

4 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5 9. Centralized control, reinforced by a strong organizational culture, creates
6 and sustains uniformity in the personnel policies and practices throughout Costco's operational
7 units. This common culture is characterized by unwritten rules and informal, undocumented
8 personnel practices featuring discretion by decision makers. Such subjective personnel policies
9 are likely to be tarnished by biases that operate against women. In contrast, the formalized
10 promotion practices that Costco eschews check the biasing effects of conscious or automatic
11 gender stereotypes and the biasing and exclusionary effects on women of ingroup favoritism in a
12 predominantly male-run organization. Although Costco executive and managerial staff identified
13 several Costco policies and practices that contribute to women's underrepresentation in
14 warehouse management and assistant management and suggested policies for eliminating or
15 curtailing these barriers to equal employment opportunity, Costco has not implemented most of
16 these or other personnel practices that can mitigate the sex biases that have excluded women from
17 management.
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20 10. Below I provide the bases for my conclusions. First, I address the issue of
21 the uniformity of Costco's culture across the United States and the effect of its culture on
22 Costco's personnel policies and practices and indirectly on women's access to jobs as warehouse
23 (i.e., general) managers (GMs) and assistant warehouse managers (AGMs). Deposition testimony
24 indicates both a centralized control of operations and a common Costco culture. I then review the
25 scholarly evidence regarding employment practices that can check sex biases which stem from
26

27 ¹ In litigation, this method of analysis is known as "social framework analysis" (see J. Monahan
28 and L. Walker, *Social Science in Law: Cases and Materials*, Fourth Edition, Foundation Press,
1998, Chapter Five, "Social Science Used to Provide Context").

1 Costco's culture of managerial discretion, ingroup favoritism, and stereotyping, and compare that
2 scholarship to Costco's employment practices as described in deponents' testimony and exhibits.
3 Finally, after comparing Costco's employment practices with policies and practices that sustain or
4 reduce barriers to women's career success, I conclude that Costco has not implemented policies
5 and practices that have been shown to eliminate barriers to women's representation in jobs
6 customarily performed by men.
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8 **UNIFORMITY IN COSTCO'S ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND GENERAL**
9 **PERSONNEL PRACTICES**
10

11 *Costco's Common Culture*
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13 11. Costco's several hundred warehouses in the U.S. are unified by the
14 organization's common culture and personnel practices. An organizational culture comprises
15 shared assumptions, beliefs, norms and values about how things are done and ought to be done in
16 the organization that differentiate it from other organizations.² Organizations that rely heavily on
17 culture to structure their personnel decisions deliberately teach their culture to new employees
18 and evaluate employees partly in terms of their conformity to cultural precepts. A strong, widely-
19 shared organizational culture promotes uniformity, in part by weeding out those employees who
20 appear not to fit in the culture.
21

22 12. Costco has consciously retained its distinct, unifying culture through
23 orientation for all new employees, publications, national meetings, workshops, and oral teaching
24 on Costco's code of ethics in the day-to-day work assignments (Matthews dep., pp. 70, 107).
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26 _____
27 ² See T. E. Deal and A. A. Kennedy, *Corporate Cultures*. Addison-Wesley, 1982; E. H. Schein,
28 *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, Second Edition, Jossey-Bass, 1992; and J. Kerr and
J. W. Slocum, "Managing Corporate Culture Through Reward Systems," *Academy of
Management Executive*, Vol. 1, 1987, p. 99-108.

1 Every employee receives and signs an “Employee Agreement”—“a part of [Costco’s] culture
2 since 1983” (Matthews dep., p. 23)—that includes Costco’s core tenets, including its code of
3 ethics. This Employee Agreement is posted in every warehouse and office. Periodically, all
4 employees are invited to participate in revising this document, thereby making the culture their
5 own.
6

7 13. Costco further disseminates its cultural values and practices to its
8 employees in all its warehouses through *Costco Today*, a newsletter (Matthews dep., p. 70),
9 internet and intranet sites, courses at Costco University (e.g., Costco Leadership 101) (Zook dep.,
10 pp. 14-16), and the “Costco Perspective,” meetings for Costco employees during which senior
11 Costco staff tell the story of the company (Davis dep., pp. 17-19; Webb dep., p. 22).
12

13 14. Costco culture with respect to personnel decisions is distinctive in the
14 corporate world in its paternalistic stance toward its employees. Paternalism, in general,
15 resembles a father-child relationship in which subordinate “family” members exchange obedience
16 for care-taking.³ Costco’s version of paternalism involves an implicit contract in which
17 employees exchange obedience and loyalty for a well paying job, bene fits, and promotion
18 opportunities. I characterize Costco’s personnel practices as paternalistic because superordinates
19 have almost total control over subordinates’ advancement. In contrast to modern bureaucratic
20 personnel systems, subordinates are not entitled to be considered for promotion and have no
21 specific guidelines on how the promotion process works or where they stand in it.⁴ Instead,
22 promotions depend on employees’ developing personal relationships with decision makers in
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25 ³ Kerfoot, Deborah and David Knights. 1993. “Management, Masculinity and Manipulation.”
26 *Journal of Management Studies* 30, p. 665: “Under paternalism, management is seen as the fount
27 of all corporate wisdom and is believed to exercise its power within the constraint of protecting
28 and improving the lives of its employees.” It also helps legitimate managerial prerogatives in the
eyes of those who are protected from making decisions and those of the decision makers.

⁴ Edwards, Richard C. 1980. *Contested Terrain*. N.Y.: Basic Books.

1 which they must display loyalty and conformity to the Costco culture, while at the same time
2 making themselves visible.

3 15. Costco's description of its culture also reflects its paternalism. Its primary
4 tenets are that Costco is an "open company" in which communication flows freely (Matthews
5 dep., pp. 18, 21, 73-74), and relationships are based on trust and respect and oriented toward
6 teaching and developing its "people" whom it expects to show initiative and reward by promoting
7 from within (Matthews dep., pp. 90, 95; Gaherty dep., p. 131). As Personnel Director Judy
8 Vadney testified, "[w]e don't have a whole lot of things that are written down" (Vadney dep.,
9 pp. 107-08). Indeed, in lieu of guidelines, Costco advises new employees as to how to develop in
10 the company through a cultural production: "stories" about successful Costco employees who
11 might serve as role models, as early as in their initial orientation and then in *Costco Today*
12 (Vadney dep., pp. 106-07) and in workshops (Davis dep., p. 31). Requirements for promotion
13 have been passed down through Costco's culture (Hoover dep., p. 87; Zook dep., p. 164;
14 Matthews dep., p. 94).

15 16. In keeping with its paternalistic promotions system, Costco gives its
16 decision makers almost total discretion in their personnel decisions, eschewing written policies,
17 criteria, and justifications that imply subordinates are entitled to information or mobility.
18 Organizations maintain their cultures in part by winnowing out employees who do not believe in
19 or conform to it. Costco managers Davis (dep., p. 146) and Gaherty (dep., p. 227) attributed
20 Costco's decision not to promote Ms. Ellis in part to her failure to "get" the culture. More
21 generally, Costco's paternalistic stance across its disparate regions in giving to managers and
22 executives discretion in choosing whom to promote adversely affects the advancement
23 opportunities of all of its female employees by inviting the use of ingroup favoritism and sex
24 stereotypes in promotion decisions.
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1 *Costco's Common Business and Personnel Practices*

2 17. Although the administrative hierarchy of Costco's operations is organized
3 geographically into divisions and regions, the executives responsible for each division and its
4 regions interact regularly, sometimes transferring across regions, and work closely as a team in
5 implementing personnel and other business decisions (Portera dep., pp. 110-11). Costco's
6 avoidance of formalized, written promotion procedures does not hold when it comes to Costco's
7 core function—sales. GM Davis, who had just testified that it was unnecessary to post positions
8 for GMs, testified that there are benchmarks for every other aspect of the store (Davis dep.,
9 p. 229).

10
11 18. Costco's corporate staff is concentrated in Issaquah, Washington which its
12 divisional and regional executives visit monthly for meetings. Its human resources office is also
13 located at its Issaquah headquarters (Zook dep., p. 38) where it electronically generates paychecks
14 for warehouse employees all over the country (Jelinek dep., p. 49). The Vice President for
15 Human Resources testified that he "can look to every warehouse manager at every location . . . as
16 an extension of the HR Department in fulfilling our goal to support our employees in a fair and
17 equitable way" (Matthews dep., pp. 24-25). Corporate HR provides rudimentary job descriptions
18 (Hoover dep., pp. 71-72; Zook ex. 8, CRE 0002450)⁵ and sets company-wide salary guidelines
19 (Webb dep., p. 78). The job responsibilities for salaried jobs are standardized across different
20 regions (see, e.g., Hoover dep., pp. 66-69). All senior vice presidents, vice presidents in
21 operations, GMs and AGMs have a common set of duties (Portera dep., pp. 49, 51, 52, 55):
22 managers and vice presidents are charged with implementing Costco's policies (Vachris dep.,
23 p. 123). The four warehouse staff positions are also consistent across Costco's warehouses
24 (Schutt dep., p. 60), except in Alaska (Olson dep., p. 122). The decision makers involved in

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27 ⁵ Matthews (dep., p. 58) testified that Costco has never used professional industrial psychologists
28 in preparing job analyses, job descriptions, or performance evaluations.

1 promotion decisions for GMs and AGMs hold the same positions, regardless of region. The
2 process associated with transfers is also common across regions (Hoover dep., pp. 106-07).
3 Costco maintains its uniformity through an audit system in which Divisional and Regional Vice
4 Presidents visit warehouses at least annually, and by rotating employees across warehouses,
5 regions, and even divisions.
6

7 19. In sum, Costco maintains a distinctive culture through system-wide efforts
8 to socialize new employees to its core values. Although decisions involving individual
9 employees are made at the warehouse, regional, or divisional level, Costco maintains a common
10 HR system that handles payroll, and is governed by decisions made at corporate headquarters in
11 Executive Committee, Board, and operations meetings that draw executives from across the
12 country. Costco's common culture—with its license for executives to use discretion in personnel
13 decisions—leads to ingroup favoritism and sex stereotyping, both of which create system-wide
14 disadvantages for Costco's female employees.
15

16 **MANAGERIAL DISCRETION IN PROMOTION DECISIONS**

17 20. Promotions to AGM and GM are consequential. AGM is the pathway onto
18 the managerial career ladder. GMs can earn more than \$100K annually and make up the pool for
19 future promotions with their attendant salary increases and bonuses. Few jobs in the U.S. that
20 require only a high school degree offer these opportunities for upward mobility.
21

22 21. Men have a virtual monopoly on operations jobs above the warehouse
23 level, although 44 percent of Costco's employees are female. Costco's executive committee has
24 been all male (Matthews dep., p. 154) until a month ago when Costco added two women (Sinegal
25 dep., p. 182). All its Executive Vice Presidents are male, and all but one of the Senior Vice
26 Presidents are male (Portera dep., pp. 92-93). Men's predominance in these top positions over the
27 past five to six years is not a temporary aberration. With one exception, men have held all the
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1 executive positions during Costco's 25-year history. This fact both stems from and helps to
2 preserve Costco's exclusionary and paternalistic personnel practices.

3 ***Exclusionary Promotion Procedures***

4 22. I characterize these practices as exclusionary because in 2005, just one in
5 six Costco GMs was female, an average 1.2 percentage point increase in women's share of jobs
6 as GMs over the last five years. Women's share of AGM positions has remained almost stable
7 during the same period, growing six one-hundredths of one percent per year (CRE 0142204;
8 Omos ex. 140, CRE 0142454). James Sinegal, Costco's founder and CEO explained the
9 problem as follows: "While we have been committed to diversity at Costco from the beginning,
10 in our rush to grow, our attempts to create a healthy climate for diversity have not been as
11 successful as we had hoped they would" (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142021). As is true in other
12 large organizations, organizational inertia impedes change in Costco's policies and practices,
13 particularly with respect to promotion.⁶

16 ***Paternalistic Promotion Practices***

17 23. Paternalistic control systems lack written rules characteristic of
18 bureaucracies (see below) that constrain the decisions of the powerful. Thus, decision makers
19 operate with considerable discretion. They select people for advancement early on, and thus can
20 fulfill their prophecy by socializing the chosen for leadership status through special mentoring
21 and opportunities not open to others. Evidence for the importance of discretion in the selection of
22 AGMs and GMs exists in the absence of written guidelines or standardized decision making
23 procedures. Although Costco employs almost 400 GMs in the U.S. and more than twice that
24 number of AGMs, there are almost no written documents describing these jobs, documenting the
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27 ⁶ A. Stinchcombe. 1965. "Social Structure and the Founding of Organizations," Chapter 4 in J.
28 March (ed.), *Handbook of Organizations*, p. 155. M.T. Hannan and J. H. Freeman. 1984.
"Structural Inertia and Organizational Change." *American Sociological Review* 43:143-64. J.N.
Baron and D.M. Kreps. 1999. *Strategic Human Resources*, ch. 3.

1 qualifications necessary for holding them, describing how applicants are assessed in terms of
 2 specified criteria, or otherwise detailing the promotion process. As a result, staff with the
 3 authority to select AGMs (i.e., the regional managers in consultation with the GMs) and those
 4 with authority to select GMs (i.e., regional and divisional vice presidents) have almost complete
 5 discretion in deciding whom to promote. Managers and executives testify to relying on their own
 6 or their subordinates' discretion in making promotion decisions (Jelinek dep., pp. 67-68, 71-72;
 7 Vachris dep., pp. 78, 133).

9 *Vague and Subjective Promotion Criteria*

10 24. GMs must have a high school diploma or GED and Costco AGM
 11 experience or its equivalent (Zook ex. 8, CRE 0002450). AGMs must also have completed high
 12 school or obtained a GED and must have management experience, preferably as a merchandising
 13 manager (Zook ex. 9, CRE 0002454). Job analyses further specify that a GM “[o]versees
 14 operation of a membership warehouse with direct responsibility for complete operation and
 15 profitability,” and “[i]mplements Costco mission statement, policies, and procedures” (Zook
 16 ex. 8, CRE 0002450), and an AGM “[d]irects, plans, and coordinates programs necessary for
 17 successful warehouse operations,” and “[a]ddresses personnel issues and oversees administrative
 18 tasks as performed by departmental managers and workers” (Zook ex. 9, CRE 0002454).⁷

21 25. Rather than making these descriptions more specific or linking them to
 22 observable indicators, promotion decision makers use idiosyncratic and nonstandard criteria in
 23 deciding whom to promote. For example, Sinegal (dep., pp. 28-29) testified that he has made
 24 absolutely clear to operations people what he wants in GMs: experience at Costco, strengths in

25 _____
 26 ⁷ Clear, detailed job descriptions are relevant not only for hiring. They also can affect outsiders’
 27 ability to perform their jobs in ways that produce positive evaluations. For example, class
 28 member Kathleen Olson (dep., pp. 75, 78-79, 147-49) testified that her manager restricted her
 ability to do her job by disciplining her subordinates, indicating then he would handle the
 problem (Olson dep., p. 153), and then gave her a negative evaluation for not “tak[ing]
 ownership” of her job (Olson dep., p. 246).

1 merchandising, people skills, and financial acumen. The Employee Agreement puts this more
2 succinctly, but without any real guidance to employees seeking promotion: “Individuals will be
3 selected for promotion based on skill and ability. Where skill and ability are equal, then length of
4 continuous employment will be the determining factor.”⁸ The vice presidents to whom Personnel
5 Director Vadney talked said that a GM “should take initiative, see the big picture, be able to
6 identify areas of concern that need to be acted upon, and do that without being told” (Vadney
7 dep., p. 264). Cardoso (dep., p. 105) attributed his promotion of Dan Iaquina to GM to his
8 annual progress in payroll percent and productivity and “the number of success stories that he is
9 able to put together. . . .”

11 26. Managers and their superiors testified that before promotion to assistant
12 manager, candidates should have rotated through at least three of four warehouse staff-level
13 positions (Davis dep., p. 274; DiCerchio dep., pp. 79-85; Omos dep., pp. 220-21).⁹ Drogin’s
14 analysis indicates that only 7.6 percent of the male managers and 9.6 percent of the female
15 managers had held all four senior staff jobs before being promoted to AGM.¹⁰

17 27. Costco does not use: (1) detailed job descriptions for assistant managers
18 and warehouse managers, (2) measurable performance criteria, (3) valid measures of stated
19 criteria, (4) job postings to alert potential candidates, or (5) guidelines on what employees must
20 do to become managers. Costco does not use any of these standard personnel practices in
21 deciding whom to promote. AGMs and GMs are selected through a process Costco refers to as
22 “walking the warehouse” (Omos dep., pp. 84-90).

24
25 ⁸ Costco Employee Agreement, p. 13.

26 ⁹ Whether staff are rotated through all four positions is up to their regional manager. Omos
27 (dep., p. 221) rotates them depending on their ability and the availability of an opening.
Rotations are a collective decision with the person immediately above the promotion candidate
and sometimes Omos’s immediate superior (Omos dep., p. 222).

28 ¹⁰ Drogin, op. cit., Table 5.

1 *Managerial Discretion*

2 28. According to senior executives' and GMs' testimony, senior executives
3 pick whom to promote to warehouse management based on their impressions of the (small
4 number of) employees with whom they have contact when they make periodic walks of the
5 warehouse (see, e.g., Omoos dep., pp. 92-94). Walking the stores is an integral part of Costco's
6 culture, according to Sinegal (dep., pp. 14-19). The walk has multiple functions, including
7 auditing a store's appearance and merchandising, assessing its manager's performance, and
8 teaching the staff, as well as appraising junior managerial staff, often in one hour (Vachris dep.,
9 pp. 71, 74-75, 190, 195; Gaherty dep., pp. 45-54; Webb dep., pp. 61-68, 114; Vadney dep.,
10 pp. 264-65; Zook dep., pp. 89, 91-92; Omoos dep., pp. 84-90). Importantly for the walk's
11 function as an appraisal device, senior executives are typically accompanied by the warehouse
12 manager, its AGMs, and the merchandising manager (Webb dep., pp. 66-69; Omoos dep., pp. 84-
13 90; Gaherty dep., pp. 48-49) who, according to Vadney (dep., p. 265), actively participate in
14 conversations about merchandising, the competition, products, and people. Omoos (dep., pp. 92-
15 93) said he always includes the GM and maybe the merchandise manager on the whole walk, but
16 sometimes asks other staff to remain in their area until the group gets there. Several VPs testified
17 that they get to know the AGMs well enough from their walk so that they can assess their
18 promotability (Zook dep., pp. 99-100). From walking the warehouse "you *get a feeling* for that
19 assistant manager in an *objective way* how that warehouse is merchandised" (Zook dep., p. 89;
20 italics added).
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24 29. Every manager who testified on behalf of Costco testified that the
25 executives and managers who make the promotion decisions have a sufficient working
26 knowledge of the abilities of the AGMs in those buildings to determine who is probably qualified
27 for promotion to warehouse manager (Omoos dep., p. 124). As one vice president testified,
28

1 walking the floor permits them to evaluate people “based on their ability to merchandise, their
2 understanding of the six rights, their ability to put merchandise in the right place, ... [their ability]
3 to understand that the competition has a price, ... [and whether they are] capable of directing the
4 work force” (Hoover dep., p. 88). Hoover (dep., p. 21; italics added) testified that by the time an
5 employee becomes an assistant manager, “you’ve been working with those people on a *daily*
6 basis for as long as ten years sometimes, so we know those people really well, and we know what
7 their goals are. We know what they want to do.” Importantly, the VPs’ and GMs’ assessments of
8 the AGMs and area managers during the walks are largely unwritten. None testified to making
9 written notes about employees during the walk (Gaherty dep., pp. 52-53; Omos dep., pp. 90-91,
10 94-95).

11
12 30. Moreover, Costco’s culture of teaching and mentoring (at least some
13 employees) encourages decision makers to identify promising candidates for promotion to AGM
14 or store manager early. Being identified as someone with the potential to run a warehouse brings
15 with it sponsorship that makes early identification a self-fulfilling prophecy. Those identified as
16 promotable are mentored during subsequent walks which help them to acquire necessary skills.
17 Some AGMs are invited to Costco conferences for GMs (Hoover dep., pp. 54, 56-57), which
18 enhances their visibility, which in turn fosters promotion in a large organization (Zook dep.,
19 pp. 18, 23-24; Portera dep., pp. 137-39). Once they are known to their regional or divisional
20 executives, their opportunity structure may extend beyond their own region (Gaherty dep., p. 90).

21 **Promotable Lists**

22
23
24 31. In order to identify persons that were ready or almost ready for a
25 promotion, Costco VPs sometimes made “promotable” lists based on their observations from
26 walks and input from the GMs. Sinegal (dep., pp. 60-64) testified that at some point he asked
27 operators to identify five assistant managers in each region who were in line for promotion.
28

1 However, no stated or objective criteria exist for deciding which staff managers and AGMs are
2 capable of running a warehouse, nor does Costco provide instructions on how to identify
3 promising AGMs (Hoover dep., pp. 56-57) and there is no guidance or consensus as to how many
4 persons should be on a promotable list (Hoover dep., pp. 32-33, 126-29; Sinegal dep., pp. 65,
5 71).¹¹ GMs and their immediate superiors in the managerial hierarchy use their own judgment in
6 identifying AGMs. For the last five years Costco has been telling regional managers to prepare
7 lists of five to ten people that they deemed promotable to GM and making them familiar with
8 managers meetings and posting their pictures and bios in an actual and then a virtual (i.e., web
9 based) "Green Room" that Sinegal installed to display Costco's rising stars (Sinegal dep., pp. 67-
10 72). As noted, Sinegal has also encouraged executive vice presidents to maintain a list of
11 "promotable" AGMs based on the VPs' assessments and those of their immediate subordinates
12 (Sinegal dep., pp. 60-64). Thus, Costco has been making its informal, subjective practices more
13 permanent and hence more resistant to reform in order to designate early in their careers the
14 employees it will make the next generation of GMs. This process of institutionalizing subjective
15 practices that are vulnerable to cognitive biases, automatic ingroup favoritism, and sex
16 stereotyping will preserve the sex composition of the ranks of managers and executives.¹²

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18
19 ***Absence of Formal Standards and Procedures for Filling Openings for AGMs***

20
21 32. Promotion decisions for AGMs depend on the opinions of the regional VPs
22 and GM. No formal application procedure exists (Webb dep., p. 133), and there are no
23 application forms (Zook dep., p. 128). Although several deponents testified that they assume that
24 all staff-level managers want to be promoted, workers also list their career goals on their annual
25

26 ¹¹ Someone could not be promoted to GM in Gaherty's region unless they were on the promotable
list for his or another region (Gaherty dep., p. 79).

27 ¹² For example, all five warehouse managers that Vachris included in his "Talent Pool" and
28 characterized as having "greater" potential from San Diego district 2 are male (Zook ex. 12, CRE
0020000).

1 evaluations. In addition, in some regions employees who want to be considered for a promotion
2 must tell their manager or the senior vice president of the area (Gaherty dep., p. 62). Thus,
3 promotion decision makers believe they know from working with possible candidates on a daily
4 or weekly basis whom their next AGM should be (Schutt dep., pp. 95-96; see also Hoover dep.,
5 pp. 21, 156). Promotions to AGM do not require approval above the senior VP level. Senior VP
6 Gaherty (dep., pp. 56-57) testified that he gave final approval of a promotion from staff-level to
7 AGM in his region in response to an oral recommendation from a regional manager. He does not
8 need to see the bios of potential candidates or their evaluations because he “know[s] most of
9 those people pretty well from [his] visits to the building” (Gaherty dep., p. 57; see also pp. 58,
10 72). Thus, a regional manager has authority to promote someone to AGM who has not applied
11 (Schutt dep., p. 90) and does not usually interview candidates who come from within his/her
12 region (Webb dep., p. 118). Moreover, once Webb (dep., p. 128) has decided whom to appoint to
13 an AGM position, he does not document why he picked that candidate. Neither DiCerchio nor
14 Sinegal approve promotions to AGM (Omos dep., p. 113).

17 ***Absence of Formal Standards and Procedures for Filling Openings for Warehouse Manager***

18 33. Senior Vice President for Human Resources John Matthews described how
19 Costco executives decide who is next in line for warehouse manager: “It’s done through a
20 conversation with the corresponding warehouse managers in a region, with their district
21 managers, vice presidents, the senior vice president over that region, and the process . . . is really
22 a byproduct of day-to-day interaction with assistant warehouse managers, walking through the
23 buildings, viewing their performance, understanding that all of these people grew up within
24 Costco, have been doing this and working with these people for years in a variety of positions. .
25 .” (Matthews dep., pp. 84-85). Others shared Matthews’s confidence that they knew who was
26
27
28

1 next in line. In fact, Webb (dep., p. 127) testified that he did not review performance evaluations
2 in selecting AGM candidates.

3 34. Although AGMs who want to manage a new warehouse have the
4 prerogative of contacting its regional vice president to indicate their interest, “we do have the
5 people that we’ve selected already in mind” (Hoover dep., p. 34). Thus, GMs and higher-level
6 employees pre-select the pool of future managers based on subjective impressions formed while
7 walking the store. Senior VP Hoover (dep., p. 125) testified that they did not interview
8 management candidates because “[w]e’ve been interviewing for 10, 12 years.”
9

10
11 **CATEGORIZATION, INGROUP FAVORITISM, STEREOTYPING**
12 **AND SEX BIAS IN PROMOTIONS**

13 *Categorization into Ingroups and Outgroups*

14
15 35. As Greenwald and Krieger (2006) point out, many mental processes
16 function implicitly, outside our conscious awareness.¹³ As with other stimuli, we instantly and
17 automatically classify the people we encounter. The primary classification humans make is
18 whether another person is in our “ingroup” (“we”) or our outgroup (“they”).¹⁴ As Allport (1954)
19 wrote, “The human mind must think with the aid of categories We cannot avoid this
20 process.”¹⁵ Contemporary social psychologists have experimentally confirmed Allport’s insight:
21

22
23 ¹³ The science of implicit cognition suggests that actors do not always have conscious control
24 over their social perception, impression formation, and the judgments that motivate their actions
(Greenwald, Anthony and Linda Krieger. “Implicit Bias: Scientific Foundations.” Forthcoming
in *California Law Review*, 2006).

25 ¹⁴ Rothbart, M. and S. Lewis. 1994. “Cognitive Processes and Intergroup Relations: A
26 Historical Perspective.” Pp 347-379 in P. G. Devine, D. L. Hamilton & T. M. Ostrom (eds.),
27 *Social Cognition: Impact of Social Psychology*; Brewer, M. and R. Brown. 1998. “Intergroup
28 Relations.” Pp. 554-94 in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, edited by DT Gilbert, ST Fiske, and G
Lindzey.

¹⁵ Allport, Gordon. 1954. *The Nature of Prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.

1 categorization is automatic and adaptive because it conserves mental resources.¹⁶ We understand
 2 our social world in terms of categorical distinctions,¹⁷ and we readily categorize others into in-
 3 and outgroups, even on the basis of arbitrary and trivial characteristics.¹⁸ Sex is one of two
 4 primary dimensions on which we assign people to ingroup or outgroup status.¹⁹ Given its cultural
 5 salience, sex is habitually used in assigning others to in- or outgroup membership.²⁰

6
 7 36. In simplifying information, categorization also introduces cognitive errors.
 8 The cognitive process of automatic categorization affects how we encode and recall information
 9 about others, distorting our perceptions and shaping our preferences in ways unbeknownst to us.
 10 For example, we tend to assume that outgroup members are relatively homogeneous, while we
 11 recognize the heterogeneity in members of our ingroup.

12 ***Preference for Members of One's Ingroup***

13
 14 37. We automatically prefer ingroup members to outgroup members, are more
 15 comfortable with them, trust them, feel more obligated and loyal to them; impute to them positive
 16 attributes and remember their positive traits while forgetting their negative ones, are predisposed
 17 to cooperate with them; and favor them when distributing rewards.²¹ This ingroup bias may be
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19 ¹⁶ Fiske, ST. 1998. "Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination" in *Handbook of Social*
 20 *Psychology*, edited by DT Gilbert, ST Fiske, and G Lindzey.

21 ¹⁷ Brewer, M. 1997. "The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations: Can Research Inform
 Practice?" *Journal of Social Issues* 53(1): 197-211.

22 ¹⁸ Tajfel, H. 1970. "Experiments in Intergroup Discrimination." *Scientific American* 223:96-
 102; Brewer and Browne, op. cit., 566.

23 ¹⁹ Brewer, MB and LN Lui. 1989. "The Primacy of Age and Sex in the Structure of Person
 Categories." *Social Cognition* 7:262-274.

24 ²⁰ Brewer and Brown, op. cit.

25 ²¹ Perdue et al. 1990. "Us and Them: Social Categorization and the Process of Intergroup Bias." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59:475-486; Baron, JN. and J. Pfeffer. 1994.
 26 "The Social Psychology of Organizations and Inequality." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 57:190-
 209; Rothbart, M and S. Lewis. 1994. "Cognitive Processes and Intergroup Relations: A
 27 Historical Perspective." Pp 347-379 in P. G. Devine, D. L. Hamilton & T. M. Ostrom (Eds.),
 28 *Social Cognition: Impact of Social Psychology*. Brown 1995; Brewer, op. cit.; Brewer and
 Brown, op. cit., 567; Fiske 1998, op. cit.

1 conscious or implicit (i.e., outside our awareness). Either form can prompt us to defer to
2 members of our ingroup over outgroup members. This means that we may automatically defer to
3 the implicit or conscious biases of a member of our ingroup over a member of an outgroup.

4 38. Unequal treatment of in- and outgroup members results primarily through
5 automatic ingroup favoritism rather than outgroup antipathy, although a positive attitude toward
6 one's ingroup necessarily implies a relatively negative view of members of the outgroup.²² We
7 are automatically inclined to distrust and depersonalize outgroup members and see them as
8 competitors,²³ but we do not automatically harm outgroup members when allocating negative
9 outcomes.²⁴ Ingroup preference helps to maintain dominant groups' privileged status.
10 Importantly, members of high-status ingroups show more ingroup favoritism than do members of
11 low-status ingroups.²⁵ The practical implication of this is that people tend to mentor others like
12 themselves.²⁶ Because in- and outgroup membership are often based on sex and men
13 predominant at the top of the workplace hierarchy, ingroup favoritism—if not checked—can
14 foster sex discrimination.
15

16 39. Harvard Business School professor and management specialist Rosabeth
17 Kanter authored a classic discussion of how ingroup favoritism operates in the workplace based
18 on a case study of a large U.S. corporation. When performance is consequential and hard to
19 predict, people tend to select others most similar to them to fill important roles because they
20 assume others similar to them will behave in similar ways.²⁷ At the executive level, Costco is a
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22
23 ²² Greenwald and Krieger, op. cit.

24 ²³ Brewer 1997, op. cit.

25 ²⁴ Brewer and Brown 1998, op. cit., 599.

26 ²⁵ Brewer and Brown 1998, op. cit., 570.

27 ²⁶ McGuire, G.M. 1996. "Race, Sex, and Informal Work Ties: Understanding The Social
28 Embeddedness of Mentor Relationships." In F. Crosby, R. Ely, and A. Murrell (eds.),
Multicultural Mentoring.

²⁷ Kanter, R.M. 1979. *Men and Women in the Corporation*. Basic.

1 predominantly male organization, and all the people who decide who are going to manage Costco
2 warehouses in the U.S. are men. Moreover, a substantial majority of the people involved in
3 selecting AGMs are male; 86 percent were male in Fall 1999, and 84 percent were male in June
4 2004 (calculated from CRE 0142435). When women participate in these decisions they are likely
5 to be the only female participant. Such skewed sex ratios of decision makers tend to make
6 women “tokens” who are both overly visible and hence subject to close scrutiny²⁸ and
7 simultaneously marginal in the decision making process.²⁹

9 *Ingroup Favoritism at Costco*

10 40. Apparent instances of ingroup favoritism are described in several
11 depositions. The testimony of class member Sandra Barnwell illustrates how the adverse effects
12 of ingroup favoritism can dog an employee’s entire career (entire deposition). After she used the
13 open-door system for help from the regional when she was sexually harassed by her GM, both the
14 regional who was close friends with her GM and her GM belittled and ostracized her, leading her
15 to transfer to a different region. The transfer meant moving to a lower position, and for the rest of
16 her career at Costco she has been repeatedly blocked in her efforts to advance, as the regional she
17 initially approached advanced in the company and became well connected with the managers in
18 the warehouses where she worked. Although Costco has grown, the executives and managers
19 who “man” the open-door policy tend to know each other through Costco’s practice of relocating
20 managers every three to seven years and through an annual conference for managers. Apart from
21 any direct personal ties, women who try to use the open-door policy above the GM level will
22 almost certainly have to go to a man for whom automatic ingroup favoritism works against
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27 ²⁸ Kanter, op. cit.

28 ²⁹ Reskin, B.F., D.B. McBrier, and J.A. Kmec. 1999. “The Determinants and Consequences of
Workplace Sex and Race Composition.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 25:335-61.

1 women. Importantly, personnel director Vadney (dep., p. 51) refers most of the complaints back
2 to the warehouse managers.

3 41. Consistent with automatic ingroup favoritism fostering differential
4 treatment for people whose superordinates are the same sex as opposed to those whose
5 superordinates are the other sex, when Omass (dep., p. 190) learned that a man on his promotable
6 list had used the company's email list for an inappropriate activity, Omass lowered him on the
7 promotable list, but he remains on the most recent list. In contrast, Olson testified that she was
8 fired for asking a subordinate to go out for sandwiches for the managers (Olson dep., pp. 275-76).

9
10 42. Other deponents describe what many social scientists would characterize as
11 ingroup favoritism. For example, Omass (dep., p. 281) indicated that the kind of person he would
12 want to promote to management was "somebody that you feel comfortable taking home for
13 dinner with your family." Male senior executives testified to the lengths they went to
14 accommodate male managers or AGMs who were single parents or dealing with a divorce (see,
15 e.g., Gaherty dep., pp. 175-77; Omass dep., pp. 203-04, 268),³⁰ although no attempt was made to
16 accommodate outgroup members Leah Horstman or Kathleen Olson when they faced similar
17 problems.³¹

18
19 43. Costco has long known that its employees perceive favoritism to be a
20 problem. When Sinegal began the BOLD initiative in 1999, focus groups comprising high level
21 managers mentioned instances of unconscious exclusion as a possible barrier to women's
22 advancement (DiCerchio dep., p. 149). Examples of the barriers that focus group participants

23
24 ³⁰ "[W]e make a lot of decisions based [on] people's personal life" (Omass dep., p. 223).

25 ³¹ As a result, Leah Horstman was not able to complete the merchandising manager rotation that
26 she needed for promotion despite the fact that she appears on Cardoso's 2001 "talent pool" as
27 being one year from promotion to assistant manager (Cardoso ex. 74, CRE 0125199). During her
28 employment at Costco, Olson, who had two pre-school children, worked from 3 p.m. to midnight
while front-end assistant manager, and from 5 a.m. to 2 p.m. when she was receiving manager
(Olson dep., pp. 110, 130-31). She testified that she said she was willing to work all night if it
would help her be promoted to manager. Instead she was terminated.

1 mentioned include: “who are we senior managers most comfortable with when deciding on new
2 promotions and new hires” and “[g]ood old boy’ network” (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142018); “I
3 hire in my own likeness” (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142047); “depends on who you know”
4 (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142045); and “[p]romote based on comfort level instead of
5 qualifications” (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142029). Every task force summary indicated that some
6 managerial and executive level employees believed that ingroup favoritism was a problem (see
7 Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142015, 0142017-18, 0142029, 0142031, 0142035, 0142037-39). A
8 2001 report which summarized barriers stemming from ingroup favoritism listed: (1) relying on
9 word of mouth to evaluate talent, (2) hiring within our comfort zone, (3) promoting people as
10 special favors or based on relationships, and (4) a reward system seen as based on favoritism
11 (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142024, 0142026). Despite the fact that executives had identified this
12 problem five years earlier, a slide on diversity shown to the Board of Directors at its April 2006
13 meeting labelled “Unconscious Exclusion” listed under “Potential Barriers”: “We sometimes
14 tend to promote people like us” (CRE 0135100). Thus, we see in the perceptions of Costco’s
15 executives and managers exactly what social scientific research predicts when promotion
16 practices are discretionary.
17
18

19 44. Few organizations can eliminate the taint of automatic ingroup favoritism
20 from every evaluation or promotion/transfer decision, but certain personnel practices permit and
21 even encourage such practices, while others limit them. Failing to post warehouse management
22 jobs invites the use of automatic ingroup favoritism which is a well established phenomenon and
23 one that can prevent outgroup members from learning about opportunities. Posting counteracts
24 the exclusionary effects of this expression of ingroup favoritism. Costco’s discretion-based
25 promotion and transfer practices and its reliance on an open-door policy as the primary remedy
26 for complaints also permit ingroup favoritism. Most organizations locate both these key
27
28

1 functions in human resources, a highly bureaucratized part of most organizations that is run by
2 trained professionals.

3 45. In sum, the automatic sorting of people into categories can lead to
4 automatic biases in our assessments of and treatment of others. These biases can have
5 discriminatory effects.³² People's automatic preferences for others like themselves can lead to
6 biased assessments and differential treatment of the sexes.³³

8 **Sex Stereotyping**

9 46. The process of stereotyping attributes to individuals characteristics that
10 society associates with the category to which individuals belong. In other words, stereotypes are
11 generalized beliefs about all the members of a group, and the process of stereotyping applies
12 these generalizations to individual members of a group.³⁴ While people often consciously draw
13 on stereotypes, everyone has *implicit stereotypes* that distort how we regard others outside our
14 awareness. Stereotyping results from automatic categorization through a process that has been
15 termed "illusory correlation" in which people infer a correlation between belonging to a particular
16 group and having certain attributes, despite the fact that no correlation exists. Illusory correlation
17 leads us to systematically underestimate the differences on a wide range of characteristics among
18 members of outgroups (i.e., "all {fill in the blank} are alike") and to exaggerate the differences on
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24 ³² Fiske 1998, op. cit.

25 ³³ Brewer and Browne 1998, op. cit.

26 ³⁴ Brewer, M.B., V. Dull, and L.N. Lui. 1981. "Perceptions of the Elderly: Stereotypes as
27 Prototypes." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 41, 656-670; Schmidt, D.F. and S.M.
28 Boland. 1986. "Structure of Perceptions of Older Adults: Evidence for Multiple Stereotypes."
Psychology and Aging, 1, 255-260. See also Bargh, J.A., M. Chen, and L. Burrows. 1996.
"Automaticity of Social Behavior: Direct Effects of Trait Construct and Stereotype Activation on
Action." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71, 230-244.

1 a variety of traits between our ingroup and outgroups (Brown 1995:78).³⁵ Thus, stereotyping
2 involves cognitive distortion.

3 47. Automatic stereotyping biases our impressions of individual members of
4 stereotyped groups to fit societal stereotypes. Because the general process of stereotyping is
5 functional in helping us cope in a complex world, automatic stereotypes are accompanied by
6 cognitive processes that tend to perpetuate them. We tend to forget information about people that
7 contradicts our stereotypes or treat people who behave inconsistently with our stereotypes as
8 exceptions, while we treat information that is consistent with our stereotypes as confirmatory.
9 We sometimes misremember events to make the behavior of actors consistent with our
10 stereotypes.
11

12 48. Fiske distinguishes between descriptive and proscriptive stereotypes.³⁶ The
13 former include beliefs about how members of a group are (e.g., sentimental), while the latter
14 indicate how society believes members of that group ought to be (e.g., nurturant). We depend on
15 descriptive stereotypes about a group to fill in missing information about an individual or
16 interpret her/his behavior, while we draw on proscriptive stereotypes in making judgments about
17 people.
18

19 49. Given the importance of sex as a basis of categorization, most people
20 believe that the sexes differ and should differ in fundamental ways on a wide variety of
21 characteristics. Regardless of our sex, Americans learn (or “overlearn”) the content of pervasive
22 stereotypes about each sex and automatically invoke them in predicting or explaining the
23 behavior of others. Because we overlearn sex stereotypes and because stereotyping is cognitively
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27 ³⁵ Although we tend to exaggerate differences between in and outgroups on dimensions that favor
28 ingroup members, we are less likely to do so on traits that do not (Brewer and Brown 1998:570).

³⁶ Fiske 1998, op. cit.

1 efficient, encountering members of a stereotyped group can automatically trigger our sex
2 stereotypes.³⁷

3 50. Sex stereotypes tend to characterize men and women as polar opposites
4 (e.g., men are assertive, women are passive). As a result, behavior that would be acceptable and
5 even desirable in one sex often violates proscriptive sex stereotypes when it is enacted by the
6 other sex. This puts women in customarily male jobs in a double bind: when they behave in the
7 same ways as their male colleagues, they conform to occupational norms that have developed on
8 the assumption that workers are male, but violate the female sex stereotype. For example, the
9 June 2001 performance review for class member Kathleen Olson criticized her tone and
10 manner—a presentational style that is consistent with the sex stereotype for men as well as the
11 prescribed behavior for managers (Olson dep., pp. 212-13). Thus, Olson was criticized for
12 behavior that would be acceptable in a man and certainly not criticized by a male assistant
13 manager.
14

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16 51. Given the descriptive and proscriptive sex stereotypes that women are and
17 should be feminine, deferent, and nurturant and that men should be and are manly, assertive and
18 aggressive, many people may not distinguish appropriately assertive behavior by a woman
19 superior from inappropriately assertive behavior. Recent research suggests that adherents of
20 proscriptive sex stereotypes may generalize, assuming that people who do not conform to one
21 aspect of a proscribed gender stereotype are sex-role deviants more generally, and thus fail to
22 differentiate between women who are straightforward and directive at work from women who
23 would use profanity at work.³⁸ This kind of cognitive error could account for the allegations that
24 Ms. Olson and Ms. Ellis, both apparently direct individuals, used profanity at work. (According
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26 ³⁷ Gilbert, D.T. and J.G. Hixon. 1991. "The Trouble of Thinking: Activation and Application
27 of Stereotypic Beliefs." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 509-517.

28 ³⁸ Renfrow, D. 2005. Sexuality as Status. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of
Washington.

1 to this reasoning, observers would be less likely to believe and testify that men who were
2 assertive at work were profane.)

3 ***Sex Stereotyping, Organizational Sex Composition, and Sex of Decision Makers***

4 52. Decision makers in predominantly male organizations are more likely to
5 engage in sex stereotyping than those in more balanced groups.³⁹ When they are a numerical
6 minority, women tend to stand out and are subject to greater scrutiny and greater sex
7 stereotyping.⁴⁰ Both explicit and implicit biases are particularly likely to reduce promotion
8 chances for women when decision makers are predominantly male.⁴¹

10 ***Sex Stereotyping of Women as Primarily Oriented to Their Families***

11 53. Americans tend to automatically stereotype women as more family
12 oriented than career oriented, a core sex stereotype.⁴² For example, a member of a task force of
13 senior managers and VPs held in 2000 said, “Women – inability to make the hours sacrifices to
14 be accepted by the male establishment” (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142029). CEO Sinegal (dep.,
15 pp. 140-45) testified that Costco loses more senior women than men and that women are leaving
16 for family reasons. His observation, “Our experience is that women have a tendency to be the
17 caretakers” (Sinegal dep., p. 141), reflects the stereotype that women are more oriented to their
18 families than men are. Although he believes women move into areas of the company that have
19 more stable hours and are more family-friendly (Sinegal dep., pp. 133, 139-42), he views this as a
20 “societal issue, not necessarily a Costco issue” (Sinegal dep., p. 145). In supporting his point of
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24 ³⁹ Konrad, A. et al. 1992. “Diversity in Work Group Sex Composition.” *Research in Sociology of Organization* 10, p. 131.

25 ⁴⁰ Kanter, op. cit.

26 ⁴¹ Reskin, B.F. 2000. “The Proximate Causes of Employment Discrimination.” *Contemporary Sociology* 29:319-29.

27 ⁴² Wang, C. 1999. “Implicit Gender Stereotypes about Work and Family.” Unpublished; B.
28 Nosek, M. Banaji, and A. Greenwald. 2002. “Harvesting Implicit Attitudes and Beliefs from a Demonstration Web Site.” *Group Dynamics* 6:101-15.

1 view, Sinegal referred to an article he read in the New York Times about women lawyers (Sinegal
2 dep., p. 145).

3 54. Because Costco has not gathered any data comparing the percentages of
4 women and men who have left the organization and their reasons for doing so, his impressions are
5 based on a few instances that are consistent with his sex stereotypes and the stereotypes of the
6 senior—and male—people with whom he talks. Importantly, Sinegal ignores the evidence of the
7 women in this case, women who sought unsuccessfully to advance at Costco, consistent with the
8 cognitive tendency to neglect negative instances that do not conform to sex stereotypes. A
9 growing body of research indicates that women give up or leave when their opportunities to
10 advance are blocked.⁴³ But there is also a well known cognitive phenomenon that may explain
11 Sinegal's perceptions: the neglect of negative instances. People tend to remember behaviors that
12 are consistent with their stereotypes and forget those that are inconsistent. For example, male
13 research subjects evaluated female and male performance equally immediately after they
14 observed the task, but a week later, they evaluated the males as having performed better, although
15 their general recollections about the female and male they observed were equally accurate.⁴⁴
16 These automatic cognitive errors serve to perpetuate stereotypes which can then act as barriers to
17 women's advancement.
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21 55. Sinegal (dep., pp. 150-51) also testified that he believes that women are
22 offered the opportunity to move into merchandise manager jobs at the same rate as men, but turn
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25 ⁴³ Kanter, op. cit., Ogasawara, Y. 2001. *Office Ladies and Salaried Men*; Cassirer, N.R. and B.F.
26 Reskin, "High Hopes: Organizational Location, Employment Experiences, and Women's and
27 Men's Promotion Aspirations." *Work and Occupations* 27:438-63; Sturm, S. 2001. "Second
28 Generation Employment Discrimination: A Structural Approach." *Columbia Law Review*
101:458-568.

⁴⁴ Martell, R. 1996. "What Mediates Gender Bias in Work Behavior Ratings?" *Sex Roles*
35:153-66.

1 down these positions because of early and inconsistent starting times. Because Costco has never
2 done a survey on whether this is true, this belief apparently stems from a stereotype.⁴⁵

3 ***Sex Stereotypes about Women's Interests and Skills***

4 56. According to Sinegal, "since the beginning of time women have had a
5 tendency to come into our businesses in positions that were more associated with the
6 administrative aspect of the company, the front end [of the warehouse], the marketing end"
7 (Sinegal dep., pp. 146-47).

9 57. At the executive task force meetings in late 2000 and early 2001,
10 participants expressed several other sex stereotypes (e.g., "[w]omen executives [are] not skilled in
11 dealing with employees of color") (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142015, 0142018, 0142033,
12 0142039, 0142046). Importantly, GMs expressed many of the same stereotypes in the August
13 2005 focus groups (Matthews ex. 104, CRE 0142526-27, 0142535; Schutt ex. 37, CRE 0142505;
14 Portera ex. 63, CRE 0142479-80).

16 58. Sinegal (dep., pp. 178-79) also testified that "when you had a tendency as a
17 manager to look at the people who were qualified who knew the most about the merchandise,
18 they happened to be the people who were driving the forklifts. . . . [M]ost of the people who were
19 accepting those jobs of driving forklifts were male." This testimony makes three assumptions for
20 which no evidence was provided in the materials I was given to examine. It assumes that the
21 ability to drive a forklift was a formal job requirement for merchandising, when in fact people
22 could be certified as being able to drive a forklift after a promotion. Second, it assumes the
23 existence of data broken down by sex on who accepts jobs that involve driving a forklift. Such
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26 ⁴⁵ According to national data, men are only .8 of a percentage point more likely than women to
27 work night shifts and the sexes are equally likely to work evening shifts (Presser, Harriet. 2003.
28 "Race-Ethnic and Gender Differences in Nonstandardized Shifts." *Work and Occupations*
30:412-39). Indeed, in dual-earning couple, one partner often works an unconventional shift to
facilitate childcare (Presser, H. 2005. *Working in a 24-7 Economy*. Russell Sage).

1 data were not provided to me. Third, it reflects a sex stereotype that men are better than women
2 at driving forklifts or have a greater preference for doing so. Using sex as an indicator of the
3 ability to perform a job is a special kind of stereotyping which economists and sociologists call
4 “statistical discrimination” because it applies a statistical generalization about a group to
5 individual members of that group, thus denying all group members the opportunity for certain
6 jobs.⁴⁶ Although more men than women probably have driven a forklift at Costco, it is likely not
7 because female Costco employees cannot learn to or do not want to drive forklifts.⁴⁷

9 59. In the focus groups on barriers, Costco managers frequently cited sex
10 stereotypes, deponents often assumed that managers are male (e.g., using the pronouns “he” and
11 “his” generically to refer to GMs and sometimes AGMs and merchandising managers) (Zook
12 dep., pp. 53, 56; Webb dep., pp. 65, 104), and reference materials for “Your Work Plan 2002” are
13 illustrated by a male figure (Portera ex. 64, CRE 0142158).

15 ***Situations that Encourage Stereotyping***

16 60. Stereotyping is most like to occur when people are under time pressure.
17 Thus the perceived need to fill managerial jobs quickly (“panic hiring”; Omos dep., p. 280),
18 cited as one reason why these jobs aren’t posted, increases the likelihood that the decision process
19 will be distorted by sex stereotyping.
20

21 **BARRIERS TO WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION AMONG WAREHOUSE AGMS AND** 22 **GMS AND THE USE OF PERSONNEL PRACTICES THAT CAN REDUCE THEIR** 23 **EXCLUSIONARY EFFECTS** 24 25

26 ⁴⁶ Phelps, ES. 1972. “The Statistical Theory of Racism and Sexism.” *American Economic*
27 *Review* 62:659-61.

28 ⁴⁷ Padavic, I. and B.F. Reskin. 1990. “Men’s Behavior and Women’s Interest in Blue-Collar
Jobs.” *Social Problems* 37:613-28.

1 ***Sex Make-up of the Promotion Pool***

2 61. A fundamental barrier to women's advancement into managerial jobs at
 3 Costco warehouses is the demographic effect of long-standing exclusionary practices. GMs must
 4 have had experience as AGMs or equivalent experience, and according to the testimony of Costco
 5 senior managers, AGMs must have merchandising experience. Thus the pools from which AGMs
 6 and GMs are selected are almost as male-dominated as the current GMs and AGMs. In 2005, for
 7 example, women were just 18.6 percent of assistant warehouse managers and just 19.3 percent of
 8 merchandising managers.⁴⁸ As Drogin shows, among senior staff, men were twice as likely to
 9 have been promoted to merchandise manager (28.9 percent compared to 14.3 percent); while
 10 women were more than twice as likely as men to have been promoted to administration
 11 manager.⁴⁹ Among persons who made lateral transfers into merchandise manager, four fifths
 12 were male, although women comprised almost one-third of the pool.⁵⁰ Executive Vice President
 13 Zook (dep., p. 69) testified that an assistant front-end manager would have a very difficult time
 14 moving into a job as merchandising manager, and class member Barnwell (dep., p. 167) testified
 15 that she could not apply to be front end, admin., merchandising or receiving manager because
 16 they are rarely posted, consistent with Drogin's report.

17 62. Women's lower likelihood of having begun the senior staff rotation in
 18 merchandising management compared to men⁵¹ and their lower likelihood of having been
 19 promoted to AGM before they held at least three senior staff jobs⁵² contribute to their
 20 significantly longer time to promotion prior to the filing of *Ellis v. Costco*. If Costco continues to
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 25 ⁴⁸ Omos ex. 140, CRE 0142454. See also Drogin, Richard. "Statistical Analysis of Job
 Movement in Management at Costco." May 15, 2006, pp. 3-4.

26 ⁴⁹ Ibid., Table 4, p. 5.

27 ⁵⁰ Ibid., Table 7.

28 ⁵¹ Ibid., Table 4.

⁵² Ibid, computed from Table 5.

1 follow its practices of underemploying women as merchandising manager, requiring
2 merchandising management experience for promotion to AGM and requiring AGM experience
3 for promotion to manager, women will remain substantially underrepresented in the latter two
4 positions, even if all other sources of sex bias in the promotion process are eliminated.

5 ***Costco's Reluctance to Use Goals to Increase the Number of Women as AGMs and GMs***

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7 63. Several Costco managers referred to the need to maintain the pipeline. As
8 I have shown, this alone will not suffice. Given this situation, mandating goals for women's
9 representation as merchandising managers and enforcing compliance in meeting those goals is an
10 affirmative step through which Costco would be able to increase women's representation at a
11 faster pace than it has increased since the lawsuit was filed.

12
13 64. The October 1999 Executive Committee meeting notes show that Sinegal
14 announced that Costco will either identify two candidates for promotion to the senior officer level
15 by February 2000 or he will actively recruit outside candidates to be hired by the end of the fiscal
16 year (Schutt ex. 35, CRE 0135005). The following year Sinegal wrote to several senior managers
17 saying that "our attempts to create a healthy climate for diversity have not been as successful as
18 we had hoped" and that "[i]t is time to take action" (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142021). The letter
19 indicated that Dick DiCerchio would provide executive leadership on Costco's assessment of
20 "ways [Costco] can strengthen the climate for inclusiveness throughout [the] company"
21 (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142021). Sinegal invited a cross section of managers, including senior
22 managers, to participate in focus groups to strengthen the climate of inclusiveness at Costco.
23 Sinegal hoped that a report synthesizing the findings of these focus groups would identify the
24 areas in the greatest need of attention (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142021).
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1 65. The existence of organizational goals is associated with progress toward a
2 more balanced workforce.⁵³ Between October 2004 and mid-February 2005, goals appeared on
3 several of the minutes of the Operations Committee, beginning with “[e]veryone should outline
4 goals that reflect the population in the market area” (Portera ex. 61, CRE 0130053), “[e]veryone
5 should plan and outline goals” (Portera ex. 61, CRE 0130054), “[e]stablish goals and come up
6 with a plan of where we want to be in a year” (Portera ex. 61, CRE 0130057), and “we need
7 regional plans and goals. The current bench limit of eight may have to be expanded in order to
8 include potential diverse employees” (Portera ex. 61, CRE 0130058). I could find no evidence
9 that corporate monitored whether VPs acted on any of these goals. However, Costco has not sent
10 a clear signal to those involved in the promotion process that they must have goals and that they
11 must act to meet those goals. At a weekly operations meeting, DiCerchio asked operations
12 managers in each region to select “your top woman, black, Hispanic, and Asian, et cetera, no
13 matter where they are in the pecking order, and outline a plan to get them ready for promotion.
14 Submit to Dick” (Portera ex. 61, CRE 0130061). He added, “I never got a written plan in from
15 them.” Instead, when they recommend a promotion, managers must be “prepared to tell me where
16 each one of these groups are in that order” (DiCerchio dep., pp. 177-79).

19 66. There was talk about managers setting hiring goals and having their
20 performance rating and bonus depend in part on their achieving those goals, but this did not
21 happen. Presently, goals are discretionary. For example, Schutt’s senior VPs either have a
22 specific goal or a general goal to promote diversity within their region. “They submit to me what
23 they feel. I may ask them to change it” (Schutt dep., p. 175).

25 67. Matthews (dep., pp. 176-78) testified that the Executive Committee
26 adopted goals for women’s representation among GMs and higher. He was not aware of the size

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28 ⁵³ Reskin, B.F. 2000. *The Realities of Affirmative Action*. Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Assn.

1 of these goals but testified that they are division specific (Matthews dep., p. 177). Minutes from a
2 2004 Operations meeting report that everyone should outline goals that reflect the population of
3 the market area (which they periodically assess using BLS statistics) (Matthews dep., p. 190),
4 although testimony and documents available to me did not indicate that this was implemented.
5 Another 2004 Operations meeting refers to diversity, plans, outline goals, schedule meeting to
6 review and discuss early 2005 (Matthews dep., p. 191).

8 68. Although Sinegal (dep., pp. 92-93) testified that diversity cannot be
9 mandated, he set goals in October 2004 for women's representation on the Board of Directors, the
10 Executive Committee, the Vice Presidents for Operations and for GMs. Recently he made
11 appointments that met the first three goals (Sinegal dep., pp. 192-93). In 2004, he also set a goal
12 for a two-percentage point increase in women's representation among GMs (from 13 percent to
13 15 percent) that Costco achieved, but women remained substantially underrepresented among
14 GMs.

16 69. Executive and senior VPs in operations testified to different procedures
17 (Portera dep., pp. 14-17). Gaherty (dep., pp. 124-26) listed as a goal in early 2005 one female
18 manager or senior manager in all the 39 locations in his region, but did not achieve it. That has
19 been his goal for several years and remains his goal for 2006. Gaherty (dep., p. 130) testified that
20 he is taking affirmative steps to meet the goal by trying "to identify candidates from the outside
21 that we can bring into our organization to fill the pipeline." His subordinate, regional VP Webb
22 (dep., p. 194) described their affirmative steps as setting personal goals of having a female
23 manager or AGM in every warehouse in the Midwest. Executive VP Schutt (dep., p. 51) set a
24 goal that women would comprise 30% of new managers in his region without consulting the
25 previous year's goal because he "thought one third [sic] was a good goal."
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1 70. Goals are most likely to be effective when there is accountability.⁵⁴
2 Accountability reduces subjectivity, discretion, ingroup favoritism, and stereotyping by making
3 their consequences unacceptable. Employers can reduce these barriers to women's access to
4 warehouse management by using specific, objective, measurable criteria to evaluate job
5 performance or consider candidates for promotion,⁵⁵ Costco has not effectively implemented any
6 of these practices.
7

8 71. Costco does not collect or distribute to company executives a variety of
9 data on how women are faring relative to men, especially in their opportunity to work as
10 merchandise management. For example, Senior Vice President Hoover (dep., p. 117) was unable
11 to estimate women's share of AGM jobs. By keeping executives generally in the dark about
12 women's representation in this key port-of-entry job into warehouse management, Costco
13 executives are not able to explain—or address—women's underrepresentation as AGMs and
14 GMs—except to cite the stereotype that women do not want certain jobs because of their
15 commitment to their families.
16

17 72. Costco expects its managers to be geographically mobile. Willingness to
18 relocate can make people more promotable to AGM by increasing the openings for which they
19 qualify (Hoover dep., p. 149). Lack of knowledge of women's interest in promotions or their
20 willingness to move to be promoted, stereotype-based inferences of women's immobility, and
21 paternalistic attitudes that assume women are immobile or should not have long commutes create
22 barriers to women's advancement (Hoover dep., p. 121).
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27 ⁵⁴ Reskin, *ibid.*

28 ⁵⁵ Bielby, WT. 2000. "How to Minimize Workplace Gender and Racial Bias." *Contemporary Sociology* 29:120-29.

1 *Hours and Relocation Policies*

2 73. Although the biggest barriers to women's advancement on equal terms as
3 men are managerial discretion and the lack of standardized procedures, Costco's hours for
4 managers constitute barriers. Managers' hours are irregular, depending on the extent of seasonal
5 changes in merchandise, and start very early so that they can have their store completely ready for
6 a 10 a.m. opening. As several executives acknowledged, irregular hours put a burden on single
7 parents who must arrange regular childcare (see, e.g., DiCerchio dep., pp. 86-87; Portera dep.,
8 p. 203), a group that is disproportionately female. As an organization, Costco has taken no steps
9 to adjust the hours of managers or permit a later starting time.
10

11 74. Rotating GMs and sometimes AGMs every three and seven years is part of
12 Costco's philosophy (Matthews dep., p. 88; Zook dep., p. 141).⁵⁶ It is not possible to determine
13 how much this policy contributes to women's underrepresentation as AGMs and GMs because
14 Costco does not maintain records regarding workers' geographical constraints or their relocation
15 preferences. However, decision makers' perception that women are less willing to move than
16 men does matter. Relocatability is a criterion some decision makers invoke in making promotion
17 recommendations (Vachris dep., p. 185; Webb dep., p. 116). Workers whom Vachris believes to
18 be immobile get a lower score in his evaluation of who is promotable. This practice is consistent
19 with Costco's paternalism (see, e.g., Webb dep., pp. 144-45). Some testified that the general
20 managers and VPs know whether an AGM is willing to relocate or how far they can commute
21 (Hoover dep., p. 27), while others view the walk as an opportunity to learn or update an
22 employee's preferences (Webb dep., pp. 174-75). In the absence of recent, systematic, and
23 reliable information on the interests and availability of individual men and women, stereotypes
24 about women's and men's family commitments and constraints will lead decision-makers to
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28 ⁵⁶ In other words, it is not part of a written policy (Portera dep., p. 118).

1 overlook or discount the availability of qualified women who want to advance into the salaried
2 ranks. The less specific information the decision maker has about all possible candidates, the
3 more likely stereotypes will bias their decisions against women. Costco has not taken any formal
4 steps to address this problem by implementing better record keeping or rethinking the need for
5 periodic relocation, according to the materials available to me.

6
7 ***The No-Problem Problem***

8 75. Importantly, some decision makers are not convinced that women's
9 underrepresentation in top jobs stems from Costco's policies and practices. Sinegal opined that
10 job assignments reflect workers' preferences rather than managerial decisions. DiCerchio (dep.,
11 p. 149) clarified that "perceived barriers" may not be real, and Portera (dep., p. 207) testified that
12 he didn't believe that women faced special barriers. A robust research finding is that
13 commitment at the top is necessary for the elimination of subtle barriers to advancement faced by
14 women and minorities.⁵⁷

15
16 ***The Effectiveness of Costco's Efforts to Increase the Number of Women AGMs and GMs***

17 76. As Matthews (dep., p. 171) testified, prior to the BOLD Initiative and the
18 October 2005 efforts, there was no corporate effort to focus on women and minorities. Instead,
19 Matthews testified that Costco's strategy of trying to develop all employees would necessarily
20 develop female and minority employees. In 1999, Costco took its first step toward addressing its
21 lack of demographic diversity as part of the BOLD Initiative which convened focus groups of
22 high-level staff. Key findings from the BOLD Initiative regarding barriers were summarized in a
23 February 7, 2001 document (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142045-49): women are underrepresented
24 at senior levels, pipeline is weak, there aren't positions open to move into, problems with work-
25 life balance, decision makers' preferences for others who are similar to them, people are hired
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28 ⁵⁷ Reskin, B.R. and H. Hartmann. 1986. *Men's Work, Women's Work: Sex Segregation on the Job*. National Academy of Sciences Press.

1 through networks, and people's performance isn't being reviewed (Matthews ex. 98, CRE
2 0142047). Focus group participants recommended that Costco should increase exposure and
3 broaden experience of women and minorities, recognize existing talent, recruit to expand talent,
4 and make diversity hiring part of the review and bonus program (Matthews ex. 98, CRE
5 0142048).

7 77. From the initial focus groups, an on-going steering committee was
8 appointed. It recommended that the decision making process should include three questions: (1)
9 who is included in the pool of candidates, (2) who are females/minorities in the pool, and (3) if
10 females or minorities were not selected, why not and what can be done to help them develop so
11 that they are ready for the next promotional opportunity (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142013). They
12 also noted that direction should begin at the top, noting that there are only two female senior vice
13 presidents and no minority senior vice presidents (Matthews ex. 98, CRE 0142014). Sinegal
14 made DiCerchio Costco's Chief Diversity Officer in 2004 to send a clear message that Costco
15 took diversity seriously and because DiCerchio had strong feelings about this (Sinegal dep.,
16 pp. 87-96, 200-02). However, he gave DiCerchio no staff for this initiative, required no goals,
17 and disdained the use of consultants. DiCerchio's testimony showed no particularly strong
18 feelings about diversity. DiCerchio testified that before he was assigned to be Chief Diversity
19 Officer, he had not paid any attention to statistical data about women's representation in various
20 warehouse jobs (DiCerchio dep., p. 111), he did not use diversity as a criterion in calculating
21 bonuses (DiCerchio dep., p. 26), he did not set diversity goals for warehouse management
22 (DiCerchio dep., pp. 28, 53), he did not require regional vice presidents to give him a goal
23 (DiCerchio dep., p. 56), he had never disapproved of any of their goals (DiCerchio dep., p. 64), he
24 was not knowledgeable about regional vice presidents' diversity plans (DiCerchio dep., p. 29), he
25 did not know if operations vice presidents (his immediate subordinates) have been trained
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1 regarding creating a more diverse workforce (DiCerchio dep., p. 36), and he believed that
2 diversity is the total responsibility of the operators (DiCerchio dep., p. 37). Nonetheless, he did
3 testify that he has a goal of twenty warehouse managers who are female or underrepresented
4 minorities (DiCerchio dep., p. 59). When he was appointed diversity officer, he did not start a
5 diversity committee (DiCerchio dep., p. 126).

6
7 78. During 2001 the BOLD Initiative led to the Rothman Workplan which
8 required that jobs *below* assistant manager be posted and called for annual performance reviews
9 of all employees. The performance evaluation form enabled workers to express their interest in
10 promotional opportunities, but the decisions as to whether to use that information remained
11 entirely in the hands of the immediate supervisor and his/her supervisor (Matthews dep., p. 148).
12 After merchandising positions were posted, there was a small but discernible increase in women's
13 representation in those positions.⁵⁸

14
15 79. Costco continued to hold periodic diversity workshops and training for all
16 managers, the most recent in 2005. However, it conceptualized diversity as the variety of
17 differences that exist within the workforce (Matthews dep., p. 108-09), and those groups
18 continued to list the same barriers to women's advancement noted by the first focus groups, five
19 years earlier, along with some recommendations for addressing them.

20
21 ***Nonstandardized Promotion Procedures Fail to Check the Biasing Effects of Discretion***

22 80. Almost all large corporations have bureaucratized their personnel
23 practices.⁵⁹ Modern bureaucratic systems rationally coordinate the duties and responsibilities of
24 officials and employees, these duties and responsibilities being delineated by formal rules in order

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27 ⁵⁸ Drogin, op. cit., Table 2a.

28 ⁵⁹ Kalleberg, A., D. Knoke, P.V. Marsden, and J. Spaeth. 1996. *Organizations in America*.
Sage.

1 to constrain private, idiosyncratic, and personal interests of individuals.⁶⁰ Among the hallmarks
2 of bureaucracy are official records in the form of written documents, specialization of roles, and
3 accountability.⁶¹ Costco has bureaucratized its sales and financial functions and its personnel
4 department provides orientation and on-going training to all Costco's employees. But in an
5 important departure from the norm, HR does not oversee the promotion system or promotion
6 decisions. The bureaucratic practices of written records, rules, and penalties and the uniform
7 application of those rules contrast with paternalism which gives complete discretion to the
8 persons who distribute rewards and punishments and acknowledges few if any rights for their
9 subordinates, and which thus lack standardized procedures, written guidelines and records, and
10 genuine oversight.

11
12 81. The independence of Costco's promotion system from HR or the personnel
13 department means that there is no common source of information from which employees can
14 obtain guidance regarding career advancement or go to for recourse for unfair discipline, outside
15 their Divisional and Regional Warehouse hierarchy.⁶² An employee who is summarily
16 disciplined or terminated has no recourse but through the "open-door" policy. I saw no evidence
17 that people whose door was supposed to be open were governed by any rules or formal
18 obligations. So the open-door policy is simply another part of Costco in which discretion and its
19 concomitants, ingroup favoritism and stereotyping, are given free rein.

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21
22 ***Lack of Costco Staff Responsibility for Creating or Disseminating Criteria for Promotion***

23 82. With respect to hiring, transfer, and promotion, Costco does not have a
24 staff function that develops and disseminates specific criteria for promotion to AGM or GM.

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26 ⁶⁰ March, J. and H. Simon. 1958. *Organizations*. N.Y.: Wiley.

27 ⁶¹ Nikinovich. 2000. "Bureaucracy." In the *Encyclopedia of Sociology* edited by E. Borgatta and
R. Montgomery.

28 ⁶² Director of Personnel, Judy Vadney, has no formal training in personnel practices or human
resources (Vadney dep., pp. 37-38).

1 Cardoso (dep., p. 145) testified that he does not have any guidelines from Costco as to what
2 geographical regions he should post in and that he has not received any guidelines on when he
3 can refuse a transfer request (dep., p. 180). No written guidelines describe how the promotion
4 process works for a candidate for AGM or GM (Zook dep., p. 128; Vachris dep., pp. 96-97).
5 Indeed, Vachris (dep., p. 98) testified that Costco gives senior executives little direct instruction
6 on how to promote. No one tells employees whether they are on a promotable list or even that a
7 list exists and how they might get on it.

9 83. Many employees do not know what they need to do to be promoted in
10 general and do not realize the importance of merchandise management experience. In the BOLD
11 initiative focus groups made up of top managers and officers, twenty-eight participants said that
12 the criteria for promotion were not clear and should be clarified (DiCerchio dep., p. 154). Five
13 years later, participants in the 2005 focus groups raised the same concern (DiCerchio ex. 132,
14 CRE 0130147-50).

16 84. In addition, information about opportunities for AGM and GM positions is
17 not posted. It is available only by word of mouth (see, e.g., Vadney dep., p. 24), and in a
18 predominantly male organization, ingroup favoritism makes word-of-mouth information more
19 available to males because social networks tend to be sex-based and because of ingroup
20 favoritism. Hence, women often do not learn about a position before it is filled. Although Costco
21 increasingly uses promotable lists from which regional executives select GMs, this fact is not
22 generally known (Gaherty dep., pp. 76-77), even to workers who are on such a list (Webb dep.,
23 p. 179).

25 ***Absence of Written Documents Specifying How the Promotion Process Works***

26 85. As personnel director Judy Vadney (dep., p. 107) testified, "Our culture is
27 very oral, and we don't have a whole lot of things that are written down" (see also Omass dep.,
28

1 p. 27). Although DiCerchio (dep., p. 96) and Sinegal (dep., p. 30) testified that all operations
2 executives use the same general standards, the only written qualifications for AGM and GM are a
3 high school diploma/GED and specified experience that is specific to each job. Portera (dep.,
4 pp. 106-07) testified that there are no written minimum qualification standards for the job of GM.
5 Moreover, deponents testified that Costco lacked detailed written job descriptions, written criteria
6 for holding AGM and GM positions, written guidelines as to how to operationalize the criteria
7 that Costco managers named, written guidelines regarding how the promotion system works,
8 written guidelines describing how applicants are assessed, written reports indicating why certain
9 candidates were selected, written procedures with respect to the obligations of superordinates
10 whose doors were open to grievances, and a written policy calling for mentoring. Thus,
11 Gaherty's (dep., p. 226) negative assessment of plaintiff Ellis was not in writing. He testified that
12 he did not counsel Ellis because he assumed that her GM would (Gaherty dep., pp. 227-28).
13 Gaherty (dep., p. 232) did not know how he could find out what steps were taken to improve
14 Ellis's people skills. Class member Kathleen Olson (dep., pp. 132-33, 135, 164) testified that she
15 did not know that merchandising experience was required for promotion to assistant manager and
16 that her four GMs gave her inconsistent information regarding the experience she needed be
17 promoted. Cardoso (dep., p. 199) testified that he never received any written guidelines on
18 creating a promotable list.
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22 ***Failure to Retain or Use Written Records in Promotion Process***

23 86. Costco fails to retain previous lists of promotables that would allow
24 accountability and mentoring. For example, Gaherty (dep., p. 111) did not save promotable lists
25 so it not possible to compare women's and men's promotion, once they are declared promotable
26 or to further mentor women who for some reason fall off the list. Some operations executives do
27 not retain records of past promotions. HR has not audited operations records on who is
28

1 participating in mentoring at the AGM level to see if there is an adverse impact against women
2 (Matthews dep., p. 87). Costco does not retain records indicating whether women are more likely
3 to turn down promotions than men.

4 ***Failure to Collect Data on Reasons for Small Numbers of Women AGMs and GMs***

5 87. In general, Costco failed to collect data that would reveal the nature of and
6 reasons for women's underrepresentation, despite investing time into focus groups of executives
7 and managers seeking their *opinions* about diversity. Thus, Sinegal (dep., p. 144) has no
8 information on whether some of women's turnover might be due to women believing that they
9 have no opportunity to advance. He testified that he hopes managers are not making assumptions
10 about the availability of women to move through the managerial staff positions below that of
11 AGM (Sinegal dep., p. 155), but he provided no evidence that Costco has systematically surveyed
12 managers about whether they make such assumptions.
13
14

15 ***Failure to Share Available Information among Regional Managers***

16 88. VPs don't share their promotable lists with people from other regions
17 (Omass dep., pp. 208-09). Hoover (dep., pp. 59-60) testified that he has not received any written
18 communication from another person outside his region saying here are some "potential people".
19

20 **CONCLUSION**

21 89. It is my conclusion that Costco's strong organizational culture and uniform
22 business practices produce uniformity in the general way in which promotion decisions are made
23 – through subjective impressions based on walking the store. I also conclude that subjective and
24 discretionary features of the company's promotion practice make decisions about promotion
25 vulnerable to gender bias. In addition, I have concluded that there are significant deficiencies in
26 the way the company monitors its personnel policies and practices, establishes diversity goals,
27 and evaluates managers' contributions to equal opportunity objectives. Personnel policy and
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practices at Costco headquarters and as implemented in the regions and warehouses have features known to be vulnerable to gender bias. Discretionary and subjective elements of Costco's personnel system combined with limited oversight, the belief that Costco's culture will prevent discrimination, and the lack of standardized personnel practices that are known to check cognitive errors associated with sex stereotyping and ingroup favoritism constrain women in their opportunity to become managers at Costco relative to those of men.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the law of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: August 23, 2006 _____



Barbara F. Reskin

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APPENDIX

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Barbara F. Reskin May 15, 2006; revised August 22, 2006

List of cases in which I have served as an expert in the last five years.

December 2003-February 2004: *Kathleen Gray v. Morgan Stanley*. Retained by Ellen Ryan, no expert report; testified at trial.

April-June 2005: *Wackerly v. United Bay Credit Union*. Retained by Freid, Gallagher, Taylor & Associates, Saginaw Michigan. Settled shortly before trial.

May 2005-August 2005: *Julie Barounis v. Midnight Oil/Starwood Hotels*. Retained by Outten and Goldin. Counsel dropped case because there were insufficient number of plaintiffs for a class.

May-July 2005: *Martin v. Villa Academy*. Retained by Savitt and Bruce. Settled shortly before trial.

April-May 2006. *EEOC v. LA Weight Loss*. Retained by EEOC as an expert consultant; wrote report.

Barbara F. Reskin

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2005 Harper, Shannon and Barbara Reskin, "Affirmative Action in School and on the Job." *Annual Review of Sociology* 31.

2005 Reskin, Barbara F. and Denise D. Bielby, "A Sociological Perspective on Gender and Career Outcomes." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 19 (Winter):71-86.

2005 RESKIN, BARBARA. UNCONSCIOUSNESS RAISING: WOMEN'S UNDERREPRESENTATION IN TOP-LEVEL JOBS. *REGIONAL REVIEW* 14:32-37.

1 **Barbara F. Reskin** **May 16, 2006**

2 **Depositions examined in Costco v. Ellis**

- 3 Cardoso, Fidel
- 4 Davis, Wendy
- 5 DiCerchio, Richard
- 6 Gaherty, John B.
- 7 Hoover, Dennis
- 8 Jelinek, Walter Craig
- 9 Matthews, John
- 10 Omos, Mario
- 11 Portera, Joseph
- 12 Schutt, Douglas W.
- 13 Sinegal, Jim
- 14 Vachris, Ron
- 15 Vadney, Judy
- 16 Webb, Richard Lloyd
- 17 Zook, Dick

16 **Named plaintiffs**

- 17 Ellis, Shirley Rae
- 18 Horstman, Leah
- 19 Sasaki, Elaine

19 **Other class members**

- 20 Barnwell, Sandra
- 21 Olson, Katherine
- 22 Wales, Elaina

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Barbara F. Reskin
Rates as expert witness in *Ellis v. Costco*
Preparation and report writing: \$250/hour
Deposition, testimony in court \$400/hour